

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 8 and 11 to 14 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 11 and 12 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 6, 11, 12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. 2002/0036790 (Nishiyama) and in further view of U.S. 2002/0123885 (Ross) and U.S. 2003/0189599 (Ben-Shachar). Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishiyama, Ross and Ben-Shachar in further view of U.S. 2003/0077097 (Parry). Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishiyama, Ross and Ben-Shachar in further view of U.S. 2002/0103835 (Hamada). Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns a system that provides a unique user environment to a plurality of users who share usage of the same information and image processing apparatuses. In such a system, an “active session” for a user is one of a plurality of user sessions that allows a user to exclusively operate a display unit of the information processing apparatus and is a user session that occupies the display unit of the information processing apparatus to which a plurality of users can log-on. In one aspect of the invention, the information processing apparatus can simultaneously provide, for each of a plurality of users who simultaneously log-on to an operating system of the information processing apparatus, an environment, as an independent user session, in which a program desired by the user can be activated. A second display program is activated corresponding to the specified active session, and if the second display program is activated, obtained

information is transmitted to the activated second display program. By virtue of these features, the present invention can achieve the technical result that even when the display unit of the information processing apparatus is occupied by a user, it is possible to display information obtained by another user who logs-on to the operating system of the information processing apparatus without switching between the users.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to a notifying method of notifying a user of information regarding an image processing apparatus which communicates with an information processing apparatus wherein the information processing apparatus can simultaneously provide, for each of a plurality of users who simultaneously log-on to an operating system of the information processing apparatus, an environment, as an independent user session, in which a program desired by the user can be activated. The method includes: a print data transmitting step of transmitting print data to the image processing apparatus; an obtaining step of obtaining the information regarding the image processing apparatus, said obtaining step being started by one of the user sessions for a predetermined one of the plurality of users activating a first display program; a specifying step of specifying an active session from among the independent user sessions for another of the plurality of users, who simultaneously log-on to the operating system of the information processing apparatus, different from the predetermined user, wherein the other user can exclusively occupy a display unit of the information processing apparatus to operate the information processing apparatus and wherein the active session occupies the display unit of the information processing apparatus in which the plurality of users simultaneously log-on to the operating system; an activating step of activating a second display program corresponding to the active session

specified in the specifying step in order to display the information regarding the image processing apparatus obtained in the obtaining step on the display unit occupied in the specified active session; an information transmitting step of, if the second display program is activated in the activating step, transmitting the information obtained in the obtaining step to the activated second display program; and a displaying step of displaying, in response to the information transmitting step transmitting the obtained information, the transmitted information on the display unit of the information processing apparatus occupied in the active session through the second display program.

Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references, namely Nishiyama, Ross, Ben-Shachar, Parry and Hamada considered either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of the method of Claim 1. In particular, the cited references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest at least the features of specifying an active session from among independent user sessions for another of a plurality of users, who simultaneously log-on to an operating system of an information processing apparatus, different from a predetermined user, wherein the other user can exclusively occupy a display unit of the information processing apparatus to operate the information processing apparatus and wherein the active session occupies the display unit of the information processing apparatus in which the plurality of users simultaneously log-on to the operating system. Then, if the second display program is activated, transmitting obtained information to the activated second display program, and displaying the transmitted information on the display unit of the information processing apparatus occupied in the active session through the second display program.

In contrast to the present invention, Nishiyama discloses displaying status information on printing of job data on a display unit of an information processing apparatus. In response to a request from one user to a printer, the information processing apparatus of Nishiyama transmits the status information including status information on job data provided by other users from the printer to the information processing apparatus. In addition, Nishiyama discloses changing displayed contents of the status information for respective users in order to ensure confidentiality of job data set in confidential printing. (See Nishiyama , paragraphs [0067] to [0070] and Figs. 12 and 13.) While Nishiyama may disclose transmitting status information on job data provided by one user including status information on job data provided by other users to respective users, Nishiyama, fails to disclose or suggest the active session as recited in the present claims.

In addition, Ross discloses an application that manages and notifies mail information on a plurality of mail accounts. According to Ross, a user is allowed to enter a password for a mail account and realize a mail environment in which mail operations can be executed on the mail account. (See Ross, Fig. 5, and paragraphs [0061], [0089] to [0102] and [0125].) Ross further discloses that a plurality of users may execute their respective mail operations on a single PC. When one of the users, ("user A," for example) enters password to log-in to the PC, a mail environment for the exclusive use by the user A is displayed on the display unit of the PC.

In contrast, an active session of the present claims is for one of the users who simultaneously log-on to the operating system of the information processing apparatus, and that one user can exclusively occupy a display unit of the information processing apparatus to operate the information processing apparatus, whereas the mail

environment for exclusive use by user A of Ross is provided as a display screen for processing mail operations in the information processing apparatus. The user for the active session of the present claims can exclusively occupy the display unit of the information processing apparatus to operate the information processing apparatus, including mailing operations and any other operations, whereas the user A of Ross can only occupy the display unit to execute the mailing operations from among all operations provided by the information processing apparatus. Ross therefore fails to disclose or suggest specifying an active session from among the independent user sessions for another of the plurality of users, who simultaneously log-on to the operating system of the information processing apparatus, different from the predetermined user, wherein the other user can exclusively occupy a display unit of the information processing apparatus to operate the information processing apparatus and wherein the active session occupies the display unit of the information processing apparatus in which the plurality of users simultaneously log-on to the operating system, as featured in the present claims.

Moreover, Ben-Shachar discloses controlling the display of a plurality of windows on a display unit of an information processing apparatus. Ben-Shachar discloses controlling the display based on the priorities given to the plurality of windows. For example, windows for informing the user of warning or error messages are always displayed in front of other windows. (See Ben-Shachar, paragraph [0040].) Ben-Shachar, however, fails to teach transmitting information from a certain user session to an active session occupying the display unit.

Applicant has reviewed the remaining references, namely Parry and Hamada, and submits the remaining references do not supply that which is missing from Nishiyama, Ross and Ben-Shachar.

In light of the deficiencies of Nishiyama, Ross, Ben-Shachar Parry and Hamada as discussed above, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

Amended independent Claims 11 and 12 are directed to an apparatus and a computer readable memory medium, respectively, substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 11 and 12 are also now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

CONCLUSION

The Director is authorized to charge the \$130 extension fee to Deposit Account No. 50-3939. The Director is further authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1205.

No claim fees are believed due; however, should it be determined that additional claim fees are required, the Director is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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